

## ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

Novel strains of isolated and purified bacteria have been identified which have the ability to degrade petroleum hydrocarbons including a variety of PAHs. Several isolates also exhibit the ability to produce a biosurfactant. The combination of the 5 biosurfactant-producing ability along with the ability to degrade PAHs enhances the efficiency with which PAHs may be degraded. Additionally, the biosurfactant also provides an additional ability to bind heavy metal ions for removal from a soil or aquatic environment.